

Draft

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting was called to order by Ms. O'Keeffe at 6:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE:

Present: Stephanie O'Keeffe (Chair), Alisa Brewer, Aaron Hayden (Clerk), Diana Stein, Gerry Weiss, Larry Shaffer (Town Manager)

Others presenting: John Musante (Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director)

SELECT BOARD'S ACTION

Discussion: FY 10 Budget – distribution, cut list, unitization budget for LSSE, and the budget.

FY 10 worse case scenario list:

Summarized cuts of FY 09 to meet mid-year State funding reduction, summarized cuts for FY 10 and the "Cascading solutions" taken in order to get to \$957k reduction.

The problems we are trying to resolve:

\$978k FY 09 mid-year cut – balanced by; surplus from health insurance trust premium holiday (\$750k reduction to Town budget, \$250k saving to employees), and unanticipated funding from State aid.

\$2.8m proposed cut in lottery aid FY 10 cut: 4.5% of Amherst's budget –

Governor has proposed new local options taxes we could enact if legislature approves them: this budget assumes that this funding will not be available. (The report shows their revenue below the line but they only cover \$1.571M so there would still be a \$1.1m gap)

Unfortunately there is no secret revenue source even with the new local options taxes: we have submitted projects for stimulus package funding that will be announced in the coming months, and there are school grants possible but these can not be considered until they are approved by the state legislature.

We should define the "core" and fund it in a robust way with the Select Boards guidelines.

(Regarding staff COLAs: Town Mgr will not take a COLA this year whatever the unions decide. Unions have offered to take a reduced COLA depending on the amount the School Administrators reduce their COLA.)

LSSE Unitization Budget:

Hand out: a comprehensive report of LSSE costs and revenues including Town staff resource allocation.

Mr. Shaffer presented the report

What's not on this list; recently eliminated programs, programs that lost money and maybe should be eliminated.

This is the first time LSSE has had a comprehensive examination on a program by program basis. This report becomes a management tool updated each year along with the other tools. Prioritization of programs still needs to be done to identify programs that meet expectations beyond funding and those which don't.

This report has taken a lot of work from the LSSE staff, which is greatly appreciated, and is a new tool that will help control costs of LSSE programs. The report will be fine tuned over time, the balance between program costs, program success, and subsidized costs can be struck.

The LSSE Commission needs to get involved in the next steps of improving this new management tool. The Commission, the Town management and the Select Board can all use this tool to create policy.

Subsidies for people who otherwise couldn't participate in several important programs have been preserved supported by (greatly reduced) contribution from taxes and other fees. It is important that LSSE continues to serve the whole Town.

Gerry Weiss recommended split fees, the regular fee and the subsidized fee so the subsidized fee can be kept lower allowing the subsidies to go further.

Alisa Brewer asked how much of the costs include utilization of Town facilities? Larry Shaffer explained that the facilities cost is included in the "Operating Costs" column. The report tries to get to the true costs of the program so facilities have to be included.

Alisa Brewer noted that Aquatics was not on the list. Mr. Shaffer reports that the outdoor program will be similar to last year (the indoor pool is not included in the FY 10) though the War Memorial pool is kept closed in the worst case cut list. War Memorial would open before the indoor pool as funds are available. Mill River pool will stay open even in the worst case.

Gerry Weiss noted significant deficits in many programs. Mr. Shaffer will look to the LSSE Commission to resolve the remaining issues like how to deal with these programs.

Gerry Weiss noted that a large increase in revenue occurs in the "Revolving Funds Admin Reimbursements". Mr. Musante explained that we can not fund permanent staff with revolving funds: This \$250k increase is a re-allocation of fees.

General Budget:

Diana Stein looking to the future notes that the LSSE report is a very transparent tool and might be applied to other budgets in Town.

Mr. Shaffer described the great deal of effort it took to create this report and that most of the departments don't have the resources to create something like it but is looking to create similar reports as they can.

Mr. Musante is happy to provide as much information as needed but we need to be clear what information will help decision making – there is so much information that what is valuable could get buried.

Mr. Weiss noted the state mandated educational bonus (the "Quinn Bill" from the 60s) for the Police . The Fire Department has it built into their contract.

Stephanie O'Keeffe –noted enterprise funds paying out to the Town.

Mr. Musante has worked on maximizing the payout: EG A hypothetical Amherst Water Inc. would build labor, and overhead costs into their fees. Since Amherst Water is part of the Town the overhead costs have to

be estimated so IT, Town Manager's offices costs etc. are charged to the enterprise fund using long established formulas. Mr. Musante has checked them out and they seem to have been well made.

Mr. Shaffer notes that the formulas are reviewed as part of the annual budget process and is always looking for other ways to tap into the funds.

Alisa Brewer – Appendix B what is the Child Care Facility (a small but curious amount)?

Mr. Shaffer reported that we do own and support the facility with maintenance resources. We should decide if we want to own buildings that we lease out to programs we can't control. It is counter to the notion of core services. We have special relationships with some programs like this: A special relationship of course has special costs including exposure to significant liability.

Diana Stein notices that the Fire Facility is not in Appendix B – Mr. Musante will see that it gets put in the next draft.

Next steps:

Mr. Shaffer asked that we take no action on the LSSE proposal until the LSSE Commission has had a look at it. The Commission may change things within it but the bottom line is being carried in the Town Manager's Budget.

Ms. Stein would like to keep the LSSE proposal presentation as informational – the tool is very useful and good for us to see.

Ms. O'Keeffe expects the numbers to be refined – Mr. Shaffer notes that everyone is in full budget mode and will be working with these proposals and the various committees will be working on refining them; the Town Manager's office will keep the Finance Committee, BCG etc. abreast of the (daily) changes. It is unlikely there will be a huge change to this proposal as it is worked on. Mr. Musante – there is parallel work going on and each week our knowledge of the implications of this budget improves and we will know better how much support we can expect from the State.. Eventually we will know how the stimulus package will effect us. All gathered together we should have a good and firm proposal for Town Meeting.

Alisa Brewer noted that there are differences in the form of budget proposals from the Schools and from Libraries. What can the Select Board expect to get from BCG.

Stephanie O'Keeffe is looking for the sharing of the budget proposals between all the groups at the BCG meeting Monday. There is a lot of information that will be newly available and the BCG will have a lot to work on.

Alisa Brewer – when will the budget book be published (as late a possible before Town Meeting and late enough to allow as much State legislation to be completed).

Mr. Musante reports that the budget book is scheduled to be published April 12th so Town Meeting members will have 2 weeks to review it. Every week there is new information but we need to steam ahead and take decisions by early April.

ADJOURNMENT

VOTED unanimously to adjourn at 8:18 p.m.

Next meetings

2/25 6:30 FY 10 Budget only, cut list and Unitization report.
2/28 Four Towns Budget Meeting at ARMS Library 9-11am
3/2 Committee on Homelessness Report, BCG update

Comments and corrections are encouraged

Respectfully submitted;

Aaron Hayden

Select Board Meeting
February 23, 2009
Town Room, Town Hall

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Ms. O'Keeffe at _____ p.m.

SELECT BOARD'S ACTION

Pole Hearing – WMECO

Public hearing opened at _____ p.m.

Closed public hearing at _____ p.m.

VOTED unanimously, OR _____ O'Keeffe, _____ Stein, _____ Weiss, _____ Brewer, _____ Hayden to approve, pending permit from the Department of Public Works, the petition from Western Massachusetts Electric Company to set one solely owned pole, 259/1-1, on the westerly side of East Pleasant Street approximately twenty nine (29) feet southerly of Orchard Hill Road. Proposed pole requested by the University of Massachusetts to light a new crosswalk, in accordance with the plan marked 6A710662.

Budget Discussion: Vehicle Inventory & Employee Overtime

VOTED unanimously, OR _____ O'Keeffe, _____ Stein, _____ Weiss, _____ Brewer, _____ Hayden to...

Town Manager's Report

VOTED unanimously, OR _____ O'Keeffe, _____ Stein, _____ Weiss, _____ Brewer, _____ Hayden to...

Approve Letter Re: Posting Committee Agendas and Minutes on Website

VOTED unanimously, OR _____ O'Keeffe, _____ Stein, _____ Weiss, _____ Brewer, _____ Hayden to...

Approve Minutes

VOTED unanimously, OR _____ O'Keeffe, _____ Stein, _____ Weiss, _____ Brewer, _____ Hayden to approve the minutes of the *February 9, 2009* Select Board meeting.

Committee Appointments – Select Board

VOTED unanimously, OR _____ O'Keeffe, _____ Stein, _____ Weiss, _____ Brewer, _____ Hayden to appoint the following:

- Yuri Friman, to the Town/Commercial Relations Committee, for a term to expire June 30, 2012.
- Juliana Dupre, to the Kanegasaki Sister City Committee, for a term to expire June 30, 2012.

Liaison & Representative Reports

VOTED unanimously, OR _____ O'Keeffe, _____ Stein, _____ Weiss, _____ Brewer, _____ Hayden to...

Chair's Report

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Stein, ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ Hayden to...

LICENSES AND PERMITS**New Common Victualler's License – Papa Gino's**

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Stein, ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ Hayden to approve the new Common Victualler's License for Papa Gino's Inc., d/b/a Papa Gino's, 48 North Pleasant Street, Manager: Joseph Kimmel.

Select Board Meeting
February 23, 2009
Town Room, Town Hall

Special All Alcoholic Liquor License – Hurricane Booster Club (Monte Carlo Night)

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Stein, ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ Hayden to approve the Special All Alcoholic Liquor License for the Hurricane Booster Club for March 14, 2009 from 6:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m. at Valentine Hall at Amherst College for Monte Carlo Night.

Special Wine & Malt Liquor License – Amherst Montessori School

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Stein, ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ Hayden to approve the Special Wine & Malt Liquor License for the Amherst Montessori School for March 14, 2009 from 7:00 p.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center of Amherst for an Auction.

ADJOURNMENT

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Stein, ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ Hayden to adjourn the open meeting at _____ p.m.

